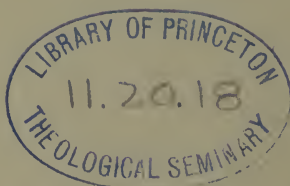


Friends, Society of
Philadelphia yearly meeting.

A Declaration of the Yearly
Meeting of Friends, held in
Philadelphia

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✓ Friends, Society of,
Philadelphia yearly meeting.

A

DECLARATION

OF THE

YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS,

HELD IN

Philadelphia,

RESPECTING THE PROCEEDINGS OF THOSE WHO HAVE LATELY

SEPARATED FROM THE SOCIETY :

AND ALSO, SHEWING

THE CONTRAST

BETWEEN THEIR DOCTRINES AND THOSE HELD

BY FRIENDS.

PHILADELPHIA :

PRINTED BY THOMAS KITE.

1828

A DECLARATION
OF THE
YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS, &c.

At a Yearly Meeting of Friends held in Philadelphia, by adjournments from the 21st of the Fourth month, to the 28th of the same, inclusive, 1818—

THE Meeting for Sufferings having been engaged in preparing a declaration of the principal causes and progress of the schism which has taken place on the part of some under our name, within the limits of this Yearly Meeting, and which also exhibits the doctrines of the Separatists, contrasted with the principles and faith of our religious Society, it was deliberately read; and the meeting being brought into a serious consideration of the affecting evidence which it furnishes, of the desolating consequences produced by the spirit and principles of unbelief and insubordination, and believing that it is due to the cause of Christianity, and the reputation of our religious Society, to bear our testimony to the world, against the antisciptural doctrines, and disorganizing proceedings and conduct of the Separatists, fully unites with this declaration and testimony, and directs it to be signed by the clerk, and published on behalf of this meeting. It being as follows.

IN taking a view of the situation of our Religious Society, and of the various exercises and close trials, which those who love our Lord Jesus Christ, have had to pass through, we believe it important to preserve a faithful narrative of the schism which has taken place among some under our name, and to trace the subtle workings of that spirit of unbelief and insubordination which has been the primary cause of it—a spirit which has been privily brought in among us, under the specious appearance of a refined spirituality, but which has blinded the understandings of many, and led them, step by step, into an open denial of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, as they are laid down by our blessed Redeemer and his apostles, in the Holy Scriptures.

Previous to entering on the proposed narrative, it may not be improper to notice the rise of our Religious Society, and some of the troubles which befel it during its infancy. It pleased the Lord Almighty in the dispensations of his infinite wisdom and goodness, to gather our worthy predecessors out of the various professions and worships of the world, to release them from the formalities of a ceremonial religion, and by the immediate teachings of his Holy Spirit to bring them to the knowledge of himself, as he is revealed in and through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Instructed in the nature of that worship which is acceptable to the Father, and yielding obedience to the discipline of the cross, they were led into purity of life and conversation, evincing great tenderness of conscience, and a fear of doing any thing which might bring a shade upon their holy profession. Thus they became as "a city set on a hill that could not be hid," and many were convinced of the truth, and joined in fellowship with them.

In the faithful maintenance of the doctrines and testimonies committed to them, they endured much persecution and bitter suffering, but notwithstanding the various obstacles they had to contend with, the society rapidly increased, and when William Penn received the grant of Pennsylvania, many of the members migrated with him, and found a peaceful retreat from the persecutions which awaited them in their own land. The privations which they were subjected to in a new country, being favourable to that simplicity and self-denial which their profession inculcates, they became a religious body comprising many substantial and divinely gifted members, in whose hands the cause of truth prospered, and many meetings were established. But the old Adversary who envies the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, and is ever busily striving to lay waste the work of righteousness in the earth, wrought upon the hearts of some restless and ambitious individuals, who had once been favoured instruments in the Lord's hand, filling their minds with envy and prejudice against their brethren, and leading them into open opposition to those things, which in the days of their fidelity, they had believed in—and finally into separation from the Society. This was sorrowfully the case with John Wilkinson and John Story and their party in England. The apostacy and misconduct of these Separatists, brought great reproach upon the Society, and subjected those who stood firm in their first love, to deeper exercises, and more painful trials, than all the outward afflictions which they endured from their cruel persecutors. It was a common outcry among them, "Away with your order; let every one be left to his liberty." They made "disturbances in meetings to the breaking of the Church's peace, causing divisions amongst friends; publishing to the world wicked and scandalous books against friends; shutting and keeping Friends out of their common meeting houses, in which they have a just right and property, and not suffering them to meet therein; and, at length, also set up separate meetings, in opposition to the meetings of God's people." See Ellwood's Journal, p. 275.

In this country, the peace and harmony of our religious Society, was early interrupted by George Keith. His ambitious, aspiring disposi-

tion, led him to attempt introducing innovations in principle and practice, and when he found that discerning friends, would not be drawn into his measures, he endeavoured to divide the Society, and to set up a yearly meeting, and other separate meetings, within the limits of this Yearly meeting. But the Society steadily adhered to its doctrines and discipline, whilst he and his party, persisting in their disorganizing attempts, were scattered from the fold of Christ, and many of them were finally disowned. The revolutionary war was productive of new trials upon the stability of the Society. Numbers were drawn aside to violate its testimony against war, but while such experienced much unsettlement, the sincerely exercised and faithful members, were more closely united in a deep religious concern, for their preservation upon the sure foundation, that they might give practical evidence of the peaceable nature of the Messiah's kingdom, by acting on all occasions consistently therewith. Thus, though it has been assailed by severe trials, within and without, the Society continued as a body firmly united in faith and discipline, and through the mercy and protection of our holy and divine Leader, was still enabled to hold up a light to the world.

Causes, however, have been operating for several years, to prepare the way for the introduction of opinions, repugnant to our religious principles and doctrines, and tending to lay waste that love and Christian fellowship, which have so conspicuously distinguished the Society, and given effect to its exertions in the cause of universal righteousness. Lukewarmness respecting the important work of religion, an increasing love of the world, and an eager pursuit of its riches, pleasures and fashions, disqualifying many for usefulness in the church, introduced weakness, and eclipsed the brightness of our Christian profession, which had shone so eminently in the example of our worthy ancestors. Others, who were influenced by a restless aspiring disposition, have at different periods opposed the administration of a sound discipline, and endeavoured to throw off these salutary restraints, indispensable to the existence of every well regulated society. Among other causes which have contributed to its weakness, is the too easy reception of papers of acknowledgment from those who had transgressed the discipline, and the admission of persons into membership who had not been sufficiently grounded in the doctrines of the Christian faith. But one of the most fertile sources of evil, has been the neglect of many of our members, in not bestowing upon their offspring a guarded religious education; labouring to imbue their susceptible minds with the saving truths of the gospel, and habituating them to frequent reading of the holy scriptures. For want of this godly concern on the part of parents and teachers, many of our youth have grown up in great ignorance of those all-important subjects, as well as of the history and principles of our ancient Friends; so that many have fallen an easy prey to the cavils and sophistry of designing men, who were seeking to lead them astray, by infusing doubts into their minds respecting the truths of the Christian revelation.

In the lapse of a few years, it has pleased the Lord in his unsearch-

able wisdom, to remove from works to rewards, many eminent servants, who stood as faithful watchmen upon the walls of Zion, and being clothed with the spirit of discernment, were enabled to detect the various stratagems of the enemy, and to defeat his attempts to lay waste the Society. Sentiments promulgated at different periods by Elias Hicks, a minister belonging to Jericho, on Long Island, occasioned great uneasiness in the minds of some of those friends, and others, who privately communicated their apprehensions to him. A spirit of libertinism and independency, fostered and strengthened by the neglect of proper discipline in families, prepared many to listen with delight to such sentiments, which were before unknown in the communications of our ministers. The disclosure of his views, however, was gradual, and for a long time in a very covert manner. The subordination and respect due from youth, to age and experience, which true religion ever enforces, were undermined by his frequent suggestions, that their elder friends were "sticking in the traditions of their fathers, and could not go on with the work of reformation, and it was therefore necessary that the young people should come forward *and take the lead.*" The observance of the first day of the week, was held up as being superstitious; and those who did not join with him in rejecting the products of slave labour, were compared with the most abandoned and wicked characters, and pronounced to be unfit to take any part in promoting the cause of Truth. Whilst he thus boldly denounced those who could not adopt his views, others were flattered and enlisted with his attentions; and thus the Society was gradually, and imperceptibly divided by his doctrines, and the strong contrasts which he drew, between different portions of it.

Under the plausible pretext of exalting the "light within," as the primary rule of faith and practice, he endeavoured to lessen the authority of the Holy Scriptures; and, when he had greatly impaired the sentiments of reverence justly due to their divine testimony, he proceeded to speak of our blessed Saviour, as being merely an example or pattern to us, and denied that his death was an offering for the sins of mankind, except for the legal sins of the Jews, calling him the Jewish Messiah. Faithful, experienced friends, who were established in the doctrines of Christ and his apostles, and who saw the baneful consequences that must result from the promulgation of such opinions, were brought under much painful solicitude, for the preservation of the Society, as many were caught with the speciousness of his arguments, and the bold and confident manner with which he advanced them. Having proceeded further in avowing his disbelief in our Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of men, publicly declaring, that the same power that *made him a Christian*, must make us Christians, and that the same power that *saved him*, must save us; he was again privately laboured with, in order to convince him of his error; and upon being told that if he persisted in preaching these doctrines, so contrary to the scriptures, and the testimony of our ancient Friends, it would produce one of the greatest schisms that had ever happened in the Society, he admitted that it would produce a schism,

but that it would soon be over, for he believed **HIS DOCTRINES** must and would prevail. He was so confirmed in his sentiments, that he said he should persevere therein, "*let the consequences be what they might.*"

In the twelfth month, 1822, Elias Hicks came to Philadelphia, with certificates from his Monthly and Quarterly meetings, to pay a visit to some parts of our Yearly meeting, including the families of two of the Monthly meetings in this city. It was well known to many friends, that he was charged with holding and propagating opinions, incompatible with the doctrines always held by our religious Society, and some of the elders being informed by two friends who were present at a meeting in the Southern Quarter, that he there advocated such opinions, two of them called upon him on his arrival in Philadelphia, and stated the information they had received, and proposed an interview between him and these two friends, which he refused to accede to. Another attempt was made to procure such an interview, which he also rejected. As the friends of Elias Hicks, as guardians of the ministry, and of the flock over which they were placed as overseers, the elders believed it to be their duty still to seek a conference with him, that "if any incorrect statement had been made, it might be speedily rectified, or if true, that he should be possessed of the concern and judgment of his friends thereon." But after a time and place was fixed, they failed in their brotherly attempt to obtain the proposed interview, by his encouraging a number of his partizans to intrude themselves into the company. The elders then addressed a letter to him, declaring that they "could not have religious unity with his conduct, nor with the doctrines he was charged with promulgating." In a subsequent communication, having the accounts of his unsoundness corroborated by his public discourses in this city, they state that they were "fully and sorrowfully confirmed in the conclusion, that he holds and is disseminating principles very different from those which are held and maintained by our religious Society, and that as he had closed the door against the brotherly care and endeavours of the elders for his benefit, and for the clearing our religious profession, they think the subject ought to claim the weighty attention of his Friends at home."

From this period may be dated the regular organization of a party devoted to his interests. Active exertions were used by those who have since stood conspicuous amongst the promoters of the present separation, to enlist every one they could, in favour of him and his opinions. Unjust and unfounded representations were industriously spread throughout the Society, in order to create a prejudice against those who could not conscientiously approve his conduct, and anti-christian views, especially against friends in Philadelphia, who openly avowed their disunity with him. Much animosity was manifested by his adherents, and the false reports and opprobrious epithets, applied to those who bore a faithful testimony against his principles and ministry, gave ample proof of the origin, and disorganizing tendency of such doctrines.

Under these circumstances our Yearly meeting convened in 1823.

Amongst the subjects which had claimed the attention of the Meeting for Sufferings, they believed it proper as representatives of the Yearly meeting, to disclaim certain controversial essays, printed in a periodical paper at Wilmington, Delaware, appearing to be written in the name of the Society, but which contained sentiments incompatible with those it had always held and professed. A short minute for the purpose was adopted and forwarded to the editor; a few selections from the writings of Friends were also prepared by a committee to accompany the minute, shewing our faith upon those controverted points of doctrine. But the meeting deciding that the minute would be sufficient, it was agreed to print the selections in a pamphlet, to be distributed to our members, for the purpose of reminding them of those excellent Christian principles which our forefathers held, and suffered for. When the minutes of the Meeting for Sufferings were read in the Yearly meeting, its authority to prepare those selections, was questioned by some of those who have since separated from us; many severe reflections were passed upon that body; and much disturbance created by the disaffected upon this occasion. While some professed to admit, that the sentiments contained in the extracts might be correct, they unjustly charged the Meeting for Sufferings, with attempting to impose a creed upon the Society; others condemned the doctrines themselves, as contrary to scripture, reason, and revelation, although selected from works which had been repeatedly approved by the Society. Great noise and confusion prevailed amongst them, and the meeting adjourned. At the next sitting, one of the leaders of the disaffected party, proposed that those extracts should be expunged from the minutes of the Meeting for Sufferings; but as this would have implied a disavowal of the doctrines they contained, the meeting refused to accede to it. The clamour and violence of the opposers was such, that in order to obtain a state of quietude in the meeting, Friends at length consented to direct the Meeting for Sufferings to suspend the publication of the pamphlet, which had been printed, and placed in the book-room. We have thought it right thus to rehearse the facts relating to this subject, because they have been grossly misrepresented in various places, and motives and designs attributed to Friends, which were not only untrue, but absolutely unfounded.

Although the disaffected members denied the right of the Meeting for Sufferings, to prepare and publish extracts from the writings of our early friends, yet afterwards they themselves assumed the right of doing so, and published a pamphlet of extracts, the object of which was to support the doctrinal views of Elias Hicks. In making their selections, great injustice was done to the authors from whose works they were taken, material parts of sentences being omitted, and in some places words were introduced, so as to change entirely the true meaning of the writer, and even to make him contradict himself. In the progress of this spirit of misrepresentation and division, much labour was privately bestowed, to convince individuals of the unsoundness of the doctrines preached by Elias Hicks, and by some other ministers who had adopted his opin-

ions, and to show the desolating effects that would be produced by them upon the Society. But such was the strength of prejudice against sound friends, that arguments or entreaties in most instances were unavailing, and these endeavours to convince were often met with unkind reflections and criminations.

From the decided opposition which they had made to the dissemination of unsound principles, it was apparent to the advocates of the "new views," that the elders, and members of the Meeting for Sufferings, would present a great obstacle to their general adoption. Unwearied efforts were therefore used to bring them into discredit, and to alienate Friends from them ; and after great exertion to accomplish this object, a plan was projected for altering the discipline, so as to make these appointments subject to frequent change. Accordingly, in 1825, the project was introduced into one of the Quarterly meetings, where the disaffected party predominated, and a minute made, "contrary to the solid sense and judgment of many friends," proposing that all important appointments should be made for a limited time. On its introduction to the Yearly meeting, much discussion ensued, in which the party urged their favourite measure, but the meeting decided, that such a rule would be unsafe, and it was dismissed.

As a further means for spreading the views of the seceding party, and giving strength to their cause, they widely circulated a volume of discourses, delivered by Elias Hicks, in one of his visits within this Yearly meeting, which contain sentiments correspondent with those he had long been charged with holding, directly repugnant to the glorious character of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Saviour and Redeemer of men, our Mediator and Advocate with the Father, and also undervaluing the Holy Scriptures. A periodical paper called the Berean, devoted to the same cause, was also set up, and circulated amongst our members, in which was a series of essays, openly attacking the acknowledged doctrines of Friends, and tending to subvert their faith in the divinity of Christ, and his propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of mankind ; by which we believe many have been turned into the paths of scepticism, and thereby lost that true peace and assurance, which are only found in the faith of the gospel. The lamentable effects of the principles disseminated by such publications, became more and more obvious. Accustomed to hear the sacred truths of Christian redemption called in question, many lost that awe which those solemn subjects had heretofore inspired, and allowed themselves the liberty of speaking upon them in a light and very irreverent manner. The arising and spreading of the power of Truth in our assemblies for divine worship, was much obstructed by the spirit of unbelief ; and opposition increased among the disaffected to the administration of the discipline, especially when it was likely to displace any of their own party. In some meetings, where they had the control, unjustifiable measures were adopted to promote party purposes, thereby producing great distress and exercise to Friends. Notwithstanding all their efforts, they did not obtain that complete ascendancy which their leaders anxiously desired, Friends being enabled, through the merciful

interposition of divine assistance, to maintain their ground, with a good degree of firmness, against the inroads of infidelity, and the flood of reproach and false accusations, which was poured forth against them ; and the disaffected therefore determined to use some further means to bring about a revolution.

Previous to the Yearly meeting in 1827, John Comly, in the station of a minister, having obtained a minute from his Monthly meeting, under profession of religious concern to pay a visit to Friends, went about into different parts of the country, holding private meetings with a view of promoting disaffection, and preparing the minds of such members as could be entrusted with his designs, for a separation from the Society, provided certain plans which were devised for carrying the Yearly meeting with them, should fail. Other individuals attached to the party, were busily engaged in attending different quarterly meetings, endeavouring to foment dissatisfaction, and to procure the appointment of persons, as representatives to the approaching Yearly meeting, who they knew would be in favour of changing the clerk, a measure which they were anxiously desirous to effect. Two of the quarterly meetings where the Separatists predominated, doubled the number of their representatives, in the hope of effecting that change, and another increased its usual number one half. Propositions were sent up from those two quarterly meetings, to reconsider the discipline relating to the appointment of Elders, and members of the Meeting for Sufferings. By one of them it was proposed that " such appointments be made for a limited time ;" and by the other, that " if it may be thought right to continue said meeting [for Sufferings] the appointment of its members may be exclusively confined to the Quarterly meetings and subject to their removal,"—and " that Monthly meetings shall be authorized to remove elders, whenever it may appear their service in that station has ceased to promote the best interests of society." A remonstrance was also transmitted against the Meeting for Sufferings, for declining to acknowledge the right of the Southern Quarterly meeting to displace two of its representatives in that body, without discipline, and without any charge of delinquency.

Many of the members of our religious Society, having now for a long time indulged a spirit of insubordination, and their affections having become estranged from the principles and doctrines of the Society, as well as from those friends who stood firm in support of its order and discipline, there was little probability that they would assemble at the Yearly meeting in a proper state of mind for transacting the weighty concerns of the Church, or with a disposition to seek after the judgment of Truth. When the representatives met at the direction of the Yearly meeting to deliberate upon a Clerk, and a friend to assist him, the disaffected party proposed John Comly for clerk, and strongly urged the nomination. It was well known that he had been actively engaged in holding those clandestine meetings, for the purpose of dividing the Society, that his partizans had pre-determined upon a change, in order to get the control of the Yearly meeting, and as it was evident, the representatives could not unite in a new nomi-

nation, Friends believed it right to advocate the continuance of the present clerk, who had acceptably served the meeting, and been heretofore chosen without opposition. After being together nearly three hours, without any prospect of agreeing, it was proposed and acceded to, that a friend should inform the meeting, they were not able to unite in any name for clerk. This report was accordingly made to the Yearly meeting at its next sitting; and after it was given in, an ancient friend arose and stated, that during his attendance of that meeting, embracing a period of sixty years, it had been the custom to continue the old clerk, until another could be appointed in the unity, and he therefore proposed that the present clerk should be continued, which was accordingly done; a large number of Friends expressing themselves in favour of it, and several of the opposition eventually acceding to it. It is proper to state these facts, in order to shew, that the assertion made by the Separatists in their address, that a clerk was imposed upon the meeting, is without any foundation.

Early after the meeting convened on the following morning, John Comly, the assistant clerk, who stands conspicuous as a principal leader among the Separatists, rose, and informed the meeting that an irreconcilable difference existed in the Society, and therefore he could not conscientiously act as the organ of a body under this circumstance, and proposed an indefinite adjournment of the meeting. As there would have been no difficulty in supplying his place, had he simply requested to be released, it was evidently his design to disband the Yearly meeting, and thereby furnish his party with a pretext for setting up a meeting of their own, with a clerk devoted to their views and purposes. Friends were sorrowfully affected with a sense of the mischievous workings of a rending, disorganizing spirit, that was seeking to overturn the excellent order which had been long established amongst us, and to reduce the Society to a state of anarchy and confusion, which had been heretofore so signally owned and preserved, by the blessed presence of the Great Head of the Church. Still favoured with confidence in his mercy and all-sufficiency, they remained calm and centered to the divine gift in themselves, while the disaffected party were urging the meeting to adjourn. When it was found that they could not succeed in breaking up the meeting, but that it was enabled to maintain its dignity and authority, in refusing to comply with the unprecedented and disorderly proposal for an indefinite adjournment, the assistant clerk, notwithstanding his previous declaration, offered to serve the meeting. A fair opportunity had thus been given to all disaffected persons, to prevent, if practicable, the continuance of the meeting, or if they were so disposed, to withdraw from all participation in its proceedings. It was the next sitting to that in which the clerks had been reappointed, but so far from withdrawing, many of those who have since seceded were earnest in requesting John Comly to continue at the table, which the meeting submitted to. By thus reappointing the assistant clerk on his own proposal, the Separatists fully recognised the organization of the Yearly meeting, and were consequently bound by its conclusions. They

moreover recognised it, by uniting in its decisions on several subsequent occasions, particularly in raising a sum of money to aid our brethren of North Carolina, in removing the coloured people under their care. When the extracts from the minutes of the Yearly meeting were sent down to the Quarterly meetings, they were read and minuted in all of them but one ; and all the quarters raised their several proportions of money, as directed by the Yearly meeting, and paid it into the hands of the regular treasurer, to be placed at the disposal of the Meeting for Sufferings, thereby anticipating the continued existence of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting on its original foundation, and its representative body the Meeting for Sufferings. Notwithstanding which, the Separatists have been so disingenuous, as to assume its title, and have unjustly attempted to make the impression on the public, that their association which they have since formed, contrary to the order of our Society, is the Yearly Meeting of Philadelphia.

In relation to those propositions which were forwarded to the Yearly meeting from the three Quarterly meetings, it is proper to remark, that a number of the Separatists held a private meeting, in which they concluded to propose that they should be dismissed, which was accordingly done at their own suggestion. After having decided in a meeting composed exclusively of their own party, that the subjects should be postponed, with what candour or justice can they allege their dismissal, as an accusation against the Yearly meeting ?

During the week of the Yearly meeting, the Separatists held several other secret meetings among themselves, in violation of that harmony and brotherhood which had been so conspicuous amongst Friends, in order to arrange a plan for dismembering the Yearly meeting. At these meetings they prepared an address to the members of our Religious Society, in which they say ;—

“ Our attention has been turned to the present condition of this Yearly meeting and its different branches, and by evidence on every hand, we are constrained to declare that the unity of this body is interrupted ; that a division exists among us, developing in its progress views which appear incompatible with each other, and feelings averse to a reconciliation. DOCTRINES held by one part of society and which we *believe* to be *sound and edifying*, are pronounced by the *other* part to be *unsound and spurious*. FROM THIS has resulted a state of things that has proved destructive of peace and tranquillity, and in which the fruits of love and condescension *have been blasted*, and the comforts and enjoyments even of social intercourse greatly diminished. Measures have been pursued which we deem oppressive and in their nature and tendency calculated to undermine and destroy those benefits, to establish and perpetuate which, should be the purpose of every religious association.”

It must be obvious to every one who reads this narrative of the facts connected with the progress of the separation, that the introduction of antichristian opinions has been the grand cause which has led to it ; and however the Separatists may have since endeavoured to cover their designs and to make a different impression, in the ex-

tract we have just made from the first exhibit of their grievances, they there fully admit that they have their origin in doctrinal differences.

They proceed to declare, "It is under a solemn and deliberate view of this painful state of our affairs, that we feel bound to express to you, under a settled conviction of mind, that the period has *FULLY come*, in which we ought to look towards making a *quiet retreat* from this scene of confusion, and we therefore recommend to you deeply to weigh the momentous subject, and to adopt such a course as truth, under a solid and solemn deliberation may point to," &c. It is evident from this address, that the minds of those who adopted it, were fully prepared for a separation from our religious Society, and for the establishment of an association of their own, and we might suppose they were sincere in wishing to "make a quiet retreat." But, at the sitting of the Yearly Meeting, directly succeeding the evening on which this address was agreed upon, they again came into our meeting and made violent opposition to a concern which was brought from our women's Yearly meeting for appointing a committee to visit the Quarterly and Monthly meetings. This proposal having been weightily considered and united with by the women's meeting, was cordially received by many brethren; but the Separatists perceiving that it would interfere with their plans for drawing away our members, and with the contemplated dissolution of the Yearly meeting, raised a great outcry against it. Such was the tumult they threw themselves into, that friends, who desired all their conclusions might be under the calming influence of the presence of the Head of the Church, doubted for a time, whether that solemn, quiet deliberation could be attained, which would warrant them in making the appointment. At this juncture the meeting was informed by a friend who was at the separate meeting held the preceding evening, of the conclusions then adopted, and that further measures were suggested for effecting their disjunction; the inconsistency of their attempting to control the decisions of the meeting after having virtually withdrawn from it was so palpable, that convicted of it themselves, they then proposed to leave the appointment exclusively to Friends, and when their noise ceased, a covering of peaceful solemnity spread over the meeting, under which the appointment was made with much unanimity, and we believe it was a measure that originated in best wisdom.

At this sitting the meeting closed its business and adjourned to meet again next year, at the usual time specified in its printed constitution. It appeared to be quite as numerously attended as any other sitting during the week, and no opposition was made to the adjournment by a single member, which was a tacit admission on the part of the disaffected, that Philadelphia Yearly Meeting would convene at the usual time and place; and consequently the assembly of any part of it at a different time, under that name, is a mere assumption, without any claim whatever to its title or character.

In the 6th month following the Separatists held another meeting at Green Street, and issued an epistle to our members, in which they as-

sert that the committee just alluded to, " was appointed without the unity of the meeting, and contrary to the solid sense and judgment of much the larger number of the members in attendance." This charge is incorrect, and extremely ungenerous. Having determined as far as was in their power to dissolve the bands of society, and throw it into a state of distraction and confusion, it could not be supposed *they* were in a state of mind, qualified to exercise any solid sense and judgment respecting such a concern, or that they would unite with a measure which must in considerable degree disconcert *their* schemes. After coming to a resolution to make a quiet retreat, it was certainly highly indecorous in them to interfere in the transactions of those they professed to be retreating from ; but although they did not unite with the concern, many of them openly acquiesced in it.

It was not long after the rise of the Yearly meeting, before the work of disorganization commenced. Notwithstanding the Separatists profess in their address, to have no other discipline to propose to those in unity with them, but that of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, in the following week Green street Monthly meeting declared itself independent of Philadelphia Quarterly meeting, to which it belonged, and afterwards was received as a branch of Abington Quarter, contrary to the discipline and usage of the Society, and regardless of the remonstrance of Philadelphia Quarter against the measure. A considerable part of Radnor Monthly meeting made a like application, and was received by the same Quarter as though it was the Monthly meeting. A similar course was pursued by Bucks Quarter, in receiving a part of Mount Holly Monthly meeting, a branch of Burlington Quarterly meeting. Members of other Monthly meetings applied to, and were acknowledged as members by Darby and Byberry Monthly meetings, without certificate and without removing their residence, and in several instances, while they were under care for violations of the discipline. Byberry Monthly meeting and Abington Quarter, attempted to set up a separate meeting, composed of persons, some of whom were disowned, and others not their members, and to constitute it a Monthly meeting, within the limits of Philadelphia Quarter. Thus the rights of meetings have been invaded, the judgment of Friends expressed in opposition to these proceedings totally disregarded, and the long established order and usage of the Society infringed and laid waste.

In the sixth month epistle they say, " We therefore, &c. have agreed to propose for your consideration, the propriety and expediency of holding a yearly meeting for Friends *in unity with us*, residing within the limits of those Quarterly meetings, heretofore represented in the Yearly meeting held in Philadelphia ; for which purpose it is recommended that Quarterly and Monthly meetings, *which may be prepared for such a measure*, should appoint representatives to meet in Philadelphia, on the third second-day in the tenth month next, at 10 o'clock in the morning, in company with other members *favourable to our views*, there to hold a Yearly meeting of men and women friends," &c. To prepare the members for this measure, the principal leaders have been busily engaged, in holding meetings " heretofore unknown

to the Society ;” and in attending Quarterly and Monthly meetings, for the purpose of detaching them from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. In effecting their disjunction from Friends, many of them conducted on various occasions, with great clamour and indecorum, employing terms of abuse against those, whom they charged with domination and arbitrary proceedings, by which our religious meetings were converted into scenes of uproar and confusion. Instead of quietly withdrawing from our communion, according to their public professions, individuals who had been disowned, or whose cases were upon the minutes of their Monthly meetings, repeatedly came into meetings to which they had never belonged, and by their presence, or rude interference, prevented Friends from transacting the business, and obliged them to adjourn, when they and their party kept the house to serve their own purposes. They have changed the time of holding mid-week meetings in some instances, and when Friends have come to the house on the usual day, they have found it locked and they debarred an entrance. Wherever it has been in their power, though they pretend to retreat from us, they have obtained possession and control of the meeting-houses, so that Friends in many parts of the country, notwithstanding they adhere to the principles, and discipline, and worship of the Society, have been obliged to provide themselves with accommodations elsewhere. As they depend very much upon the influence of numbers, indefatigable exertions have been used, and various schemes resorted to, in order to induce persons to join their ranks. Not only has division been thus brought into meetings which had heretofore harmonized, but domestic peace and comfort has been in many instances affectingly broken up, by the baneful influences of this restless, unhappy spirit, which has passed like a flood through our borders, carrying away in its course many who had appeared to be in good measure settled upon the immutable foundation. But, alas ! for want of abiding in a state of humble watchfulness in the fear of the Lord, which would have preserved them from the snares of death, they have been deceived in an evil hour ; and confiding in their own righteousness, and in their own strength, not being able to discern the nature of this spirit, they have thus fallen a prey to its insidious presentations. The unsoundness in principle of many of the leading Separatists, has been often denied, notwithstanding the plainest proofs of it have been repeatedly adduced ; and lest it should prevent some fearful, timid persons from joining them, their real sentiments have, on many occasions, been concealed or glossed over. Thus, by various artifices and unwearied labours, a considerable part of the members in some of the branches of this meeting, have become separated from the Society of Friends, and in the tenth month last held a meeting, under the assumed title of Philadelphia Yearly meeting, which adjourned to meet again on the second second-day in the fourth month, 1828.

Having endeavoured to give a faithful narrative of some of the prominent events which have marked the course of the present schism, of which it is alleged that the promulgation of doctrines subversive of the faith of our religious Society, has been the primary cause, it re-

mains to exhibit these doctrines from works acknowledged by the Separatists, and which they have widely circulated for the purpose of disseminating their views; and also to contrast these doctrines, with those which have been always held and professed by the Society of Friends from its rise to the present day. It should be distinctly recollected, that, in the first official document which they issued, and in which they declare the grounds of their dissatisfaction with Friends, the Separatists assert, that “DOCTRINES held by one part of Society, and which *we believe* to be *sound* and *edifying*, are pronounced by the *other part* to be UNSOUND AND SPURIOUS. FROM THIS has resulted a state of things, that has proved destructive of peace and tranquillity, and in which the fruits of love and condescension *have been blasted*, and the *comforts* and *enjoyments*, even of *social intercourse* greatly diminished.” The address containing this declaration is signed by direction and on behalf of the meeting held on the 19th, 20th, and 21st of the 4th month 1827, by John Comly and nine other persons from different parts of our Yearly meeting, and we regard it as a candid acknowledgment, that from those doctrines, which Friends pronounce “to be *unsound* and *spurious*,” but which they “believe to be *sound* and *edifying*,” have resulted the difficulties in which the Society has been involved.

In their epistle issued in the 6th month following, they further allege, that “faithful friends in the ministry were unjustly charged with preaching infidel doctrines, denying the divinity of Christ, and undervaluing the Scriptures.” We know of no faithful friends against whom these charges have been advanced. But there are those, who not keeping in a state of humility and subjection to the Cross of Christ, which would have preserved them in the unity of the faith, and in a willingness to endure suffering for the gospel’s sake, have listened to the voice of the stranger, and being deceived by his transformations, as the appearance of an angel of light, they have by degrees lost their habitation in the blessed truth, and made shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience. Some of these continuing to exercise the office of ministers, which they once acceptably occupied among us, have been led, step by step, to broach doctrines which are subversive of the Christian faith, and contrary to the doctrines and principles of our religious Society. This defection, however, is not confined to those who were ministers, but there are many others, who hold, and are engaged in propagating, the same unsound sentiments. Their various plans have been arranged and directed, to procure the adoption of these sentiments, as the faith of the Society; but disappointed at last by their failure, and perceiving that Friends were increasingly alive to the importance of preserving the Society, from the dangerous effects of such doctrines, the only alternative, in their view, was a complete severance from its communion.

We shall not attempt to trace their unsoundness through all its ramifications, but we shall adduce evidence from their own works, which we believe must conclusively prove, that they deny the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he is the Redeemer and Saviour of men,

our Propitiation and Mediator with the Father, and also that they undervalue the Holy Scriptures. The selections are chiefly taken from the discourses of Elias Hicks. Most of their ministers inculcate the same opinions, but we have confined ourselves to a few of those discourses which are before the public in print. Extracts are also made from the Berean, a periodical publication which the Separatists have circulated for several years, as a standard work on the faith of the Society, but which we believe has had a very pernicious effect in leading astray many sincere-hearted people, who were not aware of the poison that is insidiously conveyed through its pages. This work, speaking of the volume of Elias Hicks's discourses, already noticed, says, "it will make the traditional outside christian startle, and the dreamers, high priests, the scribes and pharisees of every denomination to gnash their teeth; but the *great body of the society* on this continent, of which this venerable minister is a member, together with many other *unshackled minds* will *set their seals to the doctrines which it contains.*" Vol. I. p. 398.

In accordance with this declaration, several monthly meetings in which his adherents had the rule, and who have since joined the new sect, prepared and issued minutes expressive of their satisfaction with him and his doctrines. But the attendance of Elias Hicks at the General Association of the Separatists, held in this month at Green street, establishes beyond all doubt, his unity with them in breaking their connection with the Society of Friends; and by placing a record on their minutes of his presence, and their satisfaction with his company, the Separatists, as a body, have formally identified themselves with him and his antichristian doctrines, a declaration of which he openly made in very palpable terms, in one of their largest meetings on the preceding day.

We shall proceed with the extracts, commencing with their opinions respecting the Holy Scriptures.

Elias Hicks says, "If the scriptures were absolutely necessary, he had power to communicate them to all the nations of the earth, for he has his way as a path in the clouds: he knows how to deal out to all his rational children. But they were not necessary, and perhaps *not suited to any other people*, than they to whom they were written." Philadelphia Sermons, page 119.

"One would suppose that to a rational mind, the hearing and reading of the instructive parables of Jesus would have a *tendency* to reform and turn men about to truth and lead them on in it. *But they have no such effect.* Ibid. p. 129.

"They have been so bound up in the letter, that they think they must attend to it, to the exclusion of every thing else. Here is an abominable idol worship, of a thing *without any life at all, a dead monument.* Ibid. p. 139.

"The great and only thing needful then is, to turn inward, and *turn our back upon the letter*, for it is *all shadow.*" Ibid. p. 225.

"Now the book we read in says, 'Search the scriptures,' but *this is incorrect*, we must *all see it is incorrect*; because we have all reason to believe they read the scriptures, and *hence* they accused Jesus of being an impostor." Ibid. p. 314.

"He [Jesus] does not move us *in the least degree to any book, or writing whatever*, but leaves every thing outward entirely behind as having passed by, for *he abolished all external evidence*, as not being capable of bringing about salvation to the soul." See Quaker; E Hick's sermon, vol. II. 264.

"*No experience will ever be worth any thing to us*, which is not our own experience, begotten through the influence of the blessed spirit of God." N. York sermons, p. 123.

Thomas Wetherald, at an irregular meeting held at Green street, says, "And I want us therefore, in our investigation of spiritual things, to bring *spiritual* evidence to prove spiritual truths. Let us attend to spiritual reflections, and not be looking to the *Scriptures*, and to the systems of men, and to the words of preachers; for *all* these being of an external character, *can only form an ignis fatuus*, which 'leads to bewilder and dazzles to blind.'" Quaker, vol. II. p. 217.

In accordance with the above sentiments concerning the Holy Scriptures, the Berean says, "*In vain does any man quote the Scriptures as authority for his opinions*; for if they have not been immediately revealed to his own mind by the Holy Spirit, they deserve no better name as it respects him, than *speculations*." Vol. II. p. 211.

"Those revelations were for other times and other states, and *not for us*. They belong to those to whom they were immediately revealed. And that, and *only that*, which is immediately revealed to us, belongs in like manner to us and *to us only*." Ibid. p. 212.

"Now the revelations respecting the nature of God, which were made to the Israelites, are true when viewed as in connection with, and as having relation to their spiritual condition; but to *any other state*, they are *not true*; therefore *such revelations* abstractedly taken, are NOT TRUE IN THEMSELVES—ARE NOT THE TRUTH OF GOD." Ibid. vol. I. p. 403.

We could select many other passages derogatory to the Holy Scriptures, but these are sufficient to show the contemptuous manner in which they are spoken of by the Separatists and their ministers. They assert that they are not necessary, and perhaps not suited to any other people, than those to whom they were written; they are a thing without any life at all, a dead monument, all shadow, upon which we should turn our backs; that the direction of our Lord to search them is not correct; that his parables have no such effect as a tendency to reform and turn men about to truth; that in vain does any man quote the Scriptures as authority for his opinions; that without immediate revelation they are no better than speculations; that they only form an ignis fatuus which leads to bewilder, and dazzles to blind; that no experience will ever be worth any thing to us which is not our own experience, and that that only belongs to us, which is immediately revealed to us; and that the revelations which were made to the Israelites respecting the nature of God, ARE NOT TRUE IN THEMSELVES; ARE NOT THE TRUTH OF GOD.

We are not surprised that persons holding the opinions which they do, relating to the great truths of Christian redemption, should undervalue and endeavour to destroy the authority of the Holy Scriptures.

For so long as they are admitted to be a test of doctrine, all their pretended revelations which contradict the testimony of the Sacred Record, are properly condemned as "unsound and spurious." But we could not have supposed that at this enlightened day, when their divine authority has been so abundantly confirmed, by the accomplishment of the ancient prophecies, and in the experience of the true Christian, that any of the professed believers of the "light within" would dare to assert, that those divine revelations respecting the nature of God, are not true in themselves, are not the truth of God. It is an affecting proof of the dreadful consequences of a spirit of scepticism and unbelief, that they should become so darkened as to speak in this irreverent manner of those weighty truths revealed to the Lord's servants, to whom he condescended to speak as face to face.

The Society of Friends have always fully believed in the authenticity and divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, and acknowledge them to be the only fit outward test of doctrines, having been dictated by the Holy Spirit of God, which cannot err. They are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works; and are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus; and whatever any teach or do contrary thereto, they reject as a delusion. Under a profession of exalting the light of Christ as the immediate means of salvation, which is a doctrine most fully believed by us, some have undervalued the Holy Scriptures, as being unnecessary to the Christian. It is contrary to the practice of the Society to speak of them in any such terms. We esteem them a great blessing to the Church, and desire to cultivate feelings of gratitude to the Great Disposer of events, for preserving them through various revolutions and vicissitudes, being fully persuaded that the more we become obedient to the manifestations of the light of Christ in the heart, the more precious and valuable are those inestimable writings to us.

In proof that these have been the sentiments of the Society from the beginning, we shall adduce the testimony of Robert Barclay and William Penn. In his Apology for the principles and doctrines of the people called Quakers, which we have always owned as a declaration of our faith, Robert Barclay says, "In this respect above mentioned then, we have shewn what service and use the Holy Scriptures, as managed in and by the Spirit, are of to the church of God; wherefore we do account them a secondary rule. Moreover because they are commonly acknowledged by all to have been written by the dictates of the Holy Spirit, and that the errors which may be supposed by the injury of times to have slipped in, are not such but that there is a sufficient clear testimony left to all the essentials of the Christian faith; we do look upon them as the only fit outward judge of controversies among Christians; and that whatsoever doctrine is contrary unto their testimony, may therefore justly be rejected as false. And for our parts we are very willing that all our doctrines and practices be tried by them; which we never refused, nor ever shall, in all controversies with our adversaries, as the judge and test. We shall also be very willing to

admit it as a positive certain maxim, *that whatsoever any do, pretending to the Spirit, which is contrary to the Scriptures, be accounted and reckoned a delusion of the devil.*" p. 99.

William Penn, in his "Testimony to the Truth," after stating some groundless charges made against Friends, respecting their belief in the Holy Scriptures, says, "Whereas we in truth and sincerity believe them to be of divine authority, given by the inspiration of God through holy men, they speaking or writing them, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; that they are a declaration of those things most surely believed by the primitive Christians, and that as they contain the mind and will of God, and are his commands to us, so they in that respect are his declaratory word; and therefore are obligatory on us, and are profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, and thoroughly furnished to every good work. Nay after all, so unjust is the charge [preferring our own books, &c.] and so remote from our belief concerning the Holy Scriptures, that we both love, honour, and prefer them, before all books in the world; ever choosing to express our belief of the Christian faith and doctrine, in the terms thereof, and rejecting all principles or doctrines whatsoever, that are repugnant thereunto. Nevertheless we are well persuaded, that notwithstanding there is such an excellency in the Holy Scriptures, as we have above declared, yet the unstable, and unlearned in Christ's school, too often wrest them to their own destruction. And upon our reflection on their carnal constructions of them, we are made undervaluers of Scripture itself. But certain it is, that as the Lord hath been pleased to give us, the experience of the fulfilling of them in measure, so *it is altogether contrary to our faith and practice, TO PUT ANY MANNER OF SLIGHT OR CONTEMPT UPON THEM*, much more of being guilty of what maliciously is suggested against us; since no society of professed Christians in the world, can have a more reverent and honourable esteem for them than we have. John iv. 24. xvi. 8. Rom. i. 19. Luke i. 1. 2. Tim. iii. 16, 17. 2 Pet. iii. 16." Vol. II. p. 878.

The Separatists would appear to be great advocates for divine revelation, at the same time they declare that the revelations made to the Lord's prophets respecting the divine nature are not true. In reference to all such pretensions, William Penn says, "That we renounce all fantastical, and whimsical intoxications, or any pretence to the revelation of new matter in opposition to the ancient gospel, declared by Christ Jesus and his apostles; and therefore not the revelation of new things, but the renewed revelation of the eternal way of truth. That this revelation is the life, virtue, condition and very soul of the Gospel and second covenant." Vol. II. p. 48.

In the same essay: "If ye are led by the spirit of God, then are ye sons of God; let this suffice to vindicate our sense of a true and unerring rule, which we assert, *not in a way of derogation from those Holy Writings*, which with reverence we read, believe and desire always to obey the mind and will of God therein contained; AND LET THAT DOCTRINE BE ACCURSED THAT WOULD OVERTURN THEM." Ibid. p. 62.

It must be evident to every candid mind, that the sentiments of the Separatists which we have quoted from their own works, are at perfect variance with the doctrines of our early Friends respecting the Holy Scriptures, however they may endeavour to make the impression upon the public mind, that they are one in faith with them.

In the next place we shall shew that they deny the miraculous conception of our Lord.

Elias Hicks says, "Who was his father? He was begotten of God. *We cannot suppose that it was the outward body of flesh and blood that was begotten of God*, but a birth of the *spiritual life* in the soul. We must apply it internally and spiritually. For *nothing can be a Son of God but that which is spirit*, and nothing but the soul of man is a recipient for the light and spirit of God. Therefore *nothing can be a Son of God but that which is immortal and invisible. Nothing visible can be a Son of God.* Every visible thing must come to an end, and we must know the mortality of it. Flesh and blood cannot enter into heaven. By the analogy of reason, spirit cannot beget a material body, because the thing begotten, must be of the same nature with its father. Spirit cannot beget any thing but spirit; it cannot beget flesh and blood. *No my friends IT IS IMPOSSIBLE.*" Philadelphia sermons, p. 10.

"Now in his creed [the bishop of Rome] to which he made all the nations of Europe bow by the dint of the sword, was this of the *miraculous birth*, therefore all children for several hundred years, were brought up, and educated in this belief, *without any examination in regard to its correctness.* Finding this to be the case, I examined the accounts given on this subject by the four evangelists, and *according to my best judgment on the occasion*, I was led to think *there was considerable more scripture evidence for his being the son of Joseph*, than otherwise," &c. Elias Hicks to T. Willis.

The Berean says, "The flesh was made, not begotten, for the Word which is spiritual to appear in. A body hast thou prepared me. This does not convey to my mind, the *most distant idea* of the body of Christ being begotten of God." Vol. II. p. 27.

In these passages the miraculous conception of the body of Jesus Christ, by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, is plainly denied; as such unworthy sentiments are contrary to the declaration of Holy Scripture, we regard them as the "spurious" doctrines of infidelity or unbelief.

The succeeding extracts from the public printed discourses of the Separatists, clearly prove their denial of the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, his propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of mankind, and degrade him to a level with his creature man, liable to be lost, and standing in need of salvation as he does.

Elias Hicks says, "For he [Jesus Christ] had read the law and understood it, because he was faithful to the *manifestation* of light; and it was dispensed to him, in *proportion* to his *necessity* to understand the law. For he had *not more given* him than would *enable him to fulfil it*, the same as the other Israelites; for if he had more, he could not be an example to them." Wilmington sermon; Quaker, vol. I. p. 193.

"We must turn our back upon them, and come home to the light

of God in us ; for it is the same spirit and life that was in Jesus Christ the Son of God. We need not say that it is *his* spirit, but *only* that it is the *same* spirit, a *portion* of which was in him ; because as *reasonable* beings, we must always take things *rationally*." Ibid. p. 197.

"And what encouragement my friends we receive through this medium, when we are brought by the light into a feeling of unity with our great pattern, Jesus Christ, and with God our Creator, O see how we come up into an *equality with him*." Darby, *ibid.* p. 13.

"And we derive a portion of the same [spirit] which is able to save the soul if properly obeyed. Here now he was *put upon a level*;" &c. Ibid. p. 17.

"Here we find that the Son of God saw no alternative ; for if he gave up his testimony in order to save his natural life, he *could not be* SAVED with God's salvation : hence he surrendered to the divine will rather than to *lose his standing and favour* with his Almighty Father : and what a blessed example it was." Ibid. p. 16.

"He was tempted in all points as we are. Now how could he be tempted, *if* he had been fixed in a *state of perfection* in which *he could not turn aside*. Can you suppose as rational beings, that such a being could be tempted ? No, not any more than God Almighty could be tempted. Perfection is perfection, and *cannot be tempted*. *It is impossible*. Philadelphia sermons, p. 253.

It would follow from this argument that Elias Hicks does not believe that our blessed Lord was perfect.

"Every Christian must come up under the influence of the same light that guided Jesus Christ—that *Christ* that was *his saviour*, and *preserver* ; and that power which enabled him to do his work, will enable us to come on in the same path. Quaker, vol. I. p. 44.

"I don't want to express a great many words, but I want you to be *called home* to the substance. For the Scriptures and all the books in the world can do no more. JESUS COULD DO NO MORE than to *recommend* to this comforter, which *was* this light in him." Ibid. p. 40.

"He *never directed to himself*, but all he wanted was to lead their minds to the spirit of Truth, to the light within, and when he had done this, *he had done his office*." Ibid. p. 47.

"If we believe that God is equal and righteous in all his ways, that he has made of one blood all the families that dwell upon the earth, it is impossible that he should be partial, and therefore he has been as willing to reveal his will to every creature, as he was to our first parents, to Moses and the prophets, to Jesus Christ and his apostles. *He never can set ANY OF THESE above us*, because if he did he would be partial." Philadelphia sermons, p. 292.

"From what Jesus himself said, *HE WAS NOT GOD*." N. York sermons, p. 96.

"He was *only an outward Saviour*, that healed their outward diseases, and gave them strength of body to enjoy that outward good land. This was a *figure* of the great Comforter, which he would pray the Father to send them ; an inward one, that would heal all the diseases of their souls, and cleanse them from all their inward pollutions, that *thing of God*, that *thing* of eternal life. *It was* the soul that

wanted salvation, but this no *outward Saviour could do*, no *external Saviour could have any hand in it*." Philadelphia sermons, p. 50.

"The apostle had allusion to that perfect righteousness which is the immediate saviour in the soul, Christ within the hope of glory ; but *it was not that outward Jesus Christ that was the hope of glory*." Quaker, vol. I. p. 164.

"It [the light] is truly God in man ; for as he fills all things, he cannot be located in any thing which is capable of being located, because *to suppose that all the fulness of God was in Christ*, is to take him out of every other part of the world." Ibid. p. 166.

"Oh dearly beloved friends, young and old, may you gather deeper and deeper to that which is within the veil, where we may have access to our God *WITHOUT ANY MEDIATOR*." Quaker, vol. II. p. 277.

The preceding selections have all been taken from the discourses of Elias Hicks.

Edward Hicks, at the Green street meeting, says, "I ask then the question, how did he [Jesus Christ] leave the bosom of his Father ? Can we form no other idea than that of a corporeal being, leaving a located place, somewhere above the clouds, and coming down to this earth ? Is this the coming into the world that is meant ? I want us to go deeper—to come to *the spirituality of these things*, and to recognise a spiritual saviour, rather than an outward and corporeal one. Because it is only a spiritual one that can save us from sin. That *animal body* that appeared at Jerusalem, had its use and day, but the spirit that was clothed upon by the fulness of divine power, this was the Saviour—this is the Saviour to whom I look for salvation, and not by any means to any thing outward or corporeal." Quaker, vol. II. p. 151.

This declaration corresponds with others which we have quoted, and is a virtual denial that Jesus Christ who appeared at Jerusalem, is the Saviour of men. The term animal body, used to designate our Lord, is irreverent, and unbecoming a creature dependent upon him for salvation.

The Berean says, "We read that the Word was in the beginning with God, and was God ; and respecting the Son we read, this day have I begotten thee ; *before this day* then the Son *could not have existed*. How therefore is the Son from everlasting ?" Vol. I. p. 296.

"In what manner then, or by what *means* was he made more than man ? I answer by the *same means*, and in the *same manner*, that every *other* righteous undefiled *man* is raised above the *mere human character* ; that is to say by the power and spirit of God the Father." Vol. II. p. 258.

"Will it be presumed, that God whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, whose presence fills the whole universe, abode in his *fulness* literally in the man Jesus ? Can it be supposed, that he of whom it is declared, that he was *limited in knowledge, power, and action*, possessed absolutely the spirit of God *without measure* ? I BELIEVE NOT." Ibid. p. 259.

"He was *but an instrument* and *servant* of God, but more dignified and glorious than any other that had ever appeared in the world." Ibid.

"The Christ then which *it concerns us to have an interest in, is not that outward manifestation* which was limited in its operations to a small province—a single nation, and to this day *known only by history to a few,*" &c. Ibid. vol. II. p. 21.

"But the manifestation to us is inward, and they [primitive friends] believe that it is the Christ within, and *not the Christ without*, on which is founded their hope of glory." Vol. II. p. 84.

In his attack upon the "Doctrines of Friends," the Berean says, "The doctrine therefore contained in the chapter under review, ascribing a *proper divinity to Jesus Christ*, making him 'the foundation of every Christian doctrine,' asserting that '*the divine nature essentially belonged to him,*' and constituting him a distinct* object of faith and worship, is not only antisciptural, but opposed to the simplest principles of reason ; and is in short AMONG THE DARKEST DOCTRINES THAT HAS EVER BEEN INTRODUCED INTO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH." Vol. II. p. 259.

We are not left to conjecture the opinions of those who have separated from us, respecting our Lord Jesus Christ, nor to draw our conclusions from a few isolated expressions ; their views upon the subject are delivered in unequivocal terms, and are diffused through most of their discourses and writings. By the extracts we have made from the discourses of Elias Hicks, and the doctrinal publications of the Separatists, it is plain that they directly assert, That it is impossible for spirit to beget a material body—that they cannot suppose that the body of Jesus Christ was begotten of God—that before the day in which it was declared, I have begotten thee, the Son of God could not have existed—that nothing visible can be a Son of God—that he had no more light given him than would enable him to fulfil the law, the same as the other Israelites—that he was but an instrument and servant of God—that he was raised above the mere human character by the same means, and in the same manner, that every other righteous man is—that he was put upon a level with us—that God who is equal and righteous in all his ways, never can set him above us, because if he did he would be partial—that Christ was the Saviour of Jesus Christ—that we need not say that it is his spirit, but only that it is the same spirit, a *portion* of which was in him—that we come up into an equality with him—that Jesus could do no more than to recommend to the Comforter—that when he had done this, he had done his office—that he never directed to himself—that he was only an outward Saviour, a figure of the Comforter—it was the soul that wanted salvation, but this no outward Saviour could do, no external Saviour could have any hand in it—that Jesus Christ was not the hope of glory—that it is not that outward manifestation which it concerns us to have an interest in—that to suppose that all the fulness of God was in Christ, is to take him out of every other part of the world—that it is declared he was limited in knowledge, power, and action—that they believe not that he possessed the spirit of God without measure—that he was not God

* Note.—"The reader is requested to take notice that the word *DISTINCT* is not used by me in the case to which it is here, and in several other places, applied by the Berean." E. Bates's Reply.

—that we may have access to God without any mediator—and lastly, that ascribing a proper divinity to Jesus Christ, making him the foundation of every Christian doctrine, and asserting that the divine nature essentially belonged to him, is among the darkest doctrines that have ever been introduced into the Christian church.

On the offering of our Lord upon the cross as a sacrifice for sin, Elias Hicks remarks: “ But I do not consider that the crucifixion of the outward body of flesh and blood of Jesus on the cross, *was an atonement for any sins but the legal sins of the Jews,*” &c.—“ Surely is it possible that any rational being that has any right sense of justice or mercy, that would be willing to accept forgiveness of his sins on such terms!! Would he not rather go forward and offer himself wholly up to suffer all the penalties due to his crimes, rather than the innocent should suffer? Nay—was he so hardy as to acknowledge a willingness to be saved through such a medium, would it not prove that he stood in direct opposition to every principle of justice and honesty, of mercy and love, and show himself to be a poor selfish creature, and unworthy of notice.”!!! Elias Hick’s letter to N. Shoemaker.

He further says: “ Did Jesus Christ the Saviour ever have any material blood? Not a drop of it, my friends, not a drop of it. That blood which cleanseth from all sin, was the life of the soul of Jesus.” Quaker, vol. I. p. 41.

“ And *there is nothing* but a surrender of our own will, that *can make atonement for our sins.*” Ibid. p. 196.

“ Nothing can atone for sin *but that which induced us to sin.*” Vol. II. p. 271.

“ And what are we to do? We are to give up this life [our will] to suffer and die upon the cross; *for this is the atonement for all our sins.*” Ibid. p. 272.

At the Green street meeting Edward Hicks says: “ His work, he [Jesus Christ] declared to be finished previous to his being crucified in that outward body. Therefore what must we suppose *will become of the doctrine*, so generally received in the Christian world, that one of the main purposes of his mission, was for him *to suffer in that outward body without the gates of Jerusalem, as a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the whole world?* Here is a difficulty: for he positively declares that he had glorified his Father, and finished the work that the Father had given him to do. Now it must follow as a rational and clear conclusion, to every intelligent mind, that he must have told the truth or an untruth. If he told the truth, then he had finished the work which his heavenly Father had given him to do; and if he told an untruth, the work must have been yet to do. But I am not disposed to believe this. I do believe in the truth of the emphatic testimony of the Saviour himself, I have finished the work, and therefore that *his sufferings in the outward body, were never incorporated in the original design of the blessed Saviour’s coming into the world.*” Quaker, vol. II. p. 162.

“ But my friends, the inward suffering of the immortal soul is infinitely superior to all outward sufferings. And if sin is atoned for in our souls, it will require a sacrifice proportionable to that which is to

be benefitted by it. So that I apprehend, under this spiritual dispensation and day of light, there must be a *spiritual and inward sacrifice for our sins.*" Ibid. p. 163.

The Berean says : " Whatever redemption therefore was effected by the outward flesh and blood of Christ, *it could not in the nature of things be any thing else than an outward redemption.*" Vol. II. p. 52.

" And have we not reason to *hope* that the day is not far distant when the *absurd and pernicious idea*, that the imputed righteousness of another, is the ground of our acceptance with God, will be found but in the pages of the historian, when tracing the fruits of that lamented apostacy which early overtook Christendom." Ibid. p. 333.

By these extracts we may perceive, that Elias Hicks and his adherents deny the propitiatory sacrifice of our blessed Saviour upon the cross for the sins of the whole world, and consider that a willingness to be saved through such a medium, is in direct opposition to every principle of justice and honesty, of mercy and love, and betrays a poor selfish disposition, unworthy of notice. They believe that his sufferings in the outward body, were never incorporated in the original design of his coming into the world—that whatever redemption was effected by those sufferings, it was only an outward redemption, and confined exclusively to the legal sins of the Jews ; and in their opinion the sacrifice of the will is the only atonement for all the sins now committed—that nothing can atone for sin, but that which induced us to sin. This doctrine, as it is contrary to the Holy Scriptures, so it is not, and never was the faith of the Society of Friends. We believe that nothing man can do, or suffer, will atone for, or cancel his sins. They are remitted by the mercy of God, through Christ Jesus our Lord, for the sake of the sufferings and death of Christ, and it is the power and efficacy of that propitiatory offering, *upon faith and repentance*, that justifies both Jews and Gentiles from the sins that are past ; and it is the power of Christ's spirit in our hearts, that purifies and makes us acceptable before God. " Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ ; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God ; to declare I say at this time his righteousness ; that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. iii. 24 to 26. " But God commendeth his love towards us, in that *while we were yet sinners*, Christ died for us. Much more then being *now justified by his blood*, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if *when we were enemies*, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ *by whom* we have now received the atonement." Rom. v. 8 to 11.

Not only do the Separatists deny the universal efficacy of the offering of our Lord, and term the imputation of his righteousness as the ground of our acceptance, a pernicious and absurd idea, but they appear to rejoice in the hope, that the doctrine will be discarded, as the fruit of the apostacy from the Christian faith. Believing as we do, that it is only as we come to be divested of our own righteousness, and

of all confidence in it, and through divine mercy clothed upon with the righteousness of Christ, that any can have a firm ground whereon to rest their hope of salvation, we sincerely deplore the delusion of those, who thus wantonly deprive themselves of that hope, which maketh not ashamed, and entereth within the veil.

We think that every candid dispassionate enquirer after truth, who sincerely believes the testimony of the Sacred Records, must be convinced that many of the passages which we have quoted from the discourses of Elias Hicks, and the periodical works of the Separatists, inculcate doctrines of infidelity—that they do deny the divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the universal efficacy of his most satisfactory sacrifice for sin without the gates of Jerusalem, and also undervalue and tend to destroy all confidence in the authority of the Holy Scriptures. Such doctrines, we feel it an incumbent duty, to pronounce to be unsound and antichristian, and contrary to the faith which we have always held and promulgated to the world, ever since we have been a people.

For we have always professed and sincerely believed, that our Lord Jesus Christ was miraculously conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary—that God gave not the spirit by measure unto him, but that all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily, and of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace—that he was given for God's salvation to the ends of the earth, for Gentiles as well as Jews, and that no man cometh unto the Father but by him—that he was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin, the prince of this world having no part in him—that he wrought many mighty miracles—that he bore our sins in his own body upon the tree, that we being dead to sin, might live unto righteousness—that he laid down his life for the sheep, that he by the grace of God, should taste death for every man; and he is therefore the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world—that he was buried in the sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea, rose again from the dead the third day, and his body saw no corruption—that he discovered himself to his disciples for the space of forty days, ascended up on high, and now sitteth at the right hand of God, our glorious Mediator, Intercessor, and Advocate with the Father. He is that living, eternal Word that was in the beginning with God, and was God; by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. He is now come in spirit, and by his divine light with which he enlightens every man that cometh into the world, he manifests and reproves for sin, and as he is obeyed, purifies the heart, and completes the work of sanctification and justification; and thus prepares the soul to receive that crown of everlasting glory, which he will give to all them that love and serve him in sincerity and truth.

This has been our religious belief from the rise of the Society to the present day, in confirmation of which we shall adduce some testimonies from the writings of Friends, given forth at different periods.

George Fox, in a paper which he wrote, says : “ Christ took upon him the seed of Abraham, he doth not say the corrupt seed of the Gentiles ; so according to the flesh, he was of the holy seed of Abraham and David ; and his *holy body and blood* was an *offering* and a *sacrifice* for the sins of the whole world, as a lamb without blemish, whose flesh saw no corruption. By the one offering of himself, in the new testament or new covenant, he has put an end to all the offerings and sacrifices amongst the Jews in the old testament. Christ the holy Seed, was crucified, dead, and buried, according to the flesh, and raised again the third day, and his flesh saw no corruption. Though he was crucified in the flesh, yet quickened again by the Spirit, and is alive and liveth forevermore, and hath all power in heaven and in earth given to him, and reigneth over all, and is the one Mediator between God and man, even the man Christ Jesus.” Vol. II. p. 384.

In an essay entitled the royal Law of God revived, he also says, “ And further saith the apostle in 1 John i. 1, 2. ‘ We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous ; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.’ Now mark, this is a large word for all people to take notice of, that Jesus Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. Therefore every one of you in your own particulars, know this, that Christ Jesus who is crowned with glory and honour, *did taste death for every man* ; mark, *for every man* ; and WHOSOEVER DENIES THIS DOCTRINE IS AN ANTICHRIST ; AND PREACHES ANOTHER, IS A FALSE PREACHER AND SEDUCER, AND BRINGS PEOPLE TO TROUBLE AND LOSS FROM THAT WHICH IS RIGHT AND THEIR DUE, IN WHICH IS THEIR SATISFACTION. So these are universal things to all mankind, whereby all mankind might come out of the earthly old Adam, in the fall and transgression, to Him that hath died for them all, and purchased them all, and tasted death for all, and enlighteneth them all, and gave his grace to them all ; and he willeth that all might be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth of Christ, who doth this. And whoever teacheth another doctrine, *brings people into sects and confusions*, to destroy one another, where they have not natural affections, and will do that to another, which they would not have others do unto them, who *break the bonds thereby of civil commerce amongst mankind* ; and the religions, ways, and worships of all such, are no worships, religions, nor ways to God, but SET UP BY A DARK PEEVISH SPIRIT, by which they destroy one another, which are God’s creatures, about them : all which come from him who is out of the truth, whom Christ came to destroy.” p. 19.

In his answer to all such as falsely say, the Quakers are no Christians, he has this declaration : “ We believe concerning God the Father, Son and Spirit, according to the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, which we receive and embrace as the most authentic and perfect declaration of Christian faith, being indited by the holy Spirit of God, that never errs ; 1st, that there is one God and Father, of whom are all things ; 2ndly, that there is one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom all things were made, John i. and xvii. Rom. ix. who was glorified with the Father before the world began, who is God over all, blessed forever, John xiv. That there is one Holy Spirit, the promise of the

Father and the Son, and leader and sanctifier and comforter of his people, 1 John v. And we further believe, as the Holy Scriptures soundly and sufficiently express, that these three are one, even the Father, the Word and Spirit." p. 27.

Robert Barclay, in his Apology, says: "For the infinite and most wise God, who is the foundation, root and spring of all operation, hath wrought all things by his eternal Word and Son. This is that Word that was in the beginning with God and was God, by whom all things were made, and without whom was not any thing made that was made. This is that Jesus Christ, by whom God created all things, by whom and for whom all things were created that are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, Col. i. 16, who therefore is called the First born of every creature, ver. 15. As then that infinite and incomprehensible Fountain of life and motion operateth in the creatures by his own eternal word and power, so no creature has access again unto him, but *in and by the Son*, according to his own express words, no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him, Matt. xi. 27. Luke x. 22. And again he himself saith, I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father *but by me*, John xiv. 6. Hence he is fitly called the Mediator betwixt God and man: for having been with God from all eternity, *BEING HIMSELF GOD*, and also in time *partaking of the nature of man*, through him is the goodness and love of God conveyed to mankind, and by him again man receiveth and partaketh of these mercies." Apology, p. 41.

William Penn, in "A serious apology for the principles and practices of the Quakers," has this concise confession of Faith: "We do believe in one only Holy God Almighty, who is an eternal Spirit, the Creator of all things. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, his only Son, and express image of his substance; who took upon him flesh and was in the world, and in life, doctrine, miracles, death, resurrection, ascension and mediation, perfectly did, and does continue to do, *THE WILL OF GOD*; to whose holy *life, power, mediation, and blood*, we *only* ascribe our sanctification, justification, redemption, and perfect salvation. And we believe in one holy Spirit, that proceeds and breathes from the Father and the Son, as the life and virtue of both the Father and the Son; a *measure* of which is given to all to profit with; and he that has one has all, for those three are one, who is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, God over all, blessed forever, amen." Vol. II. p. 66.

In his "Primitive Christianity revived," William Penn declares—"We do believe that Jesus Christ *was* our holy sacrifice, atonement and propitiation; that he bore our iniquities, and that by his stripes we *were* healed of the wounds *Adam gave us in his fall*; and that God is just in forgiving *true penitents* upon the credit of that holy offering Christ made of himself to God for us; and that what he did and suffered, satisfied and pleased God, and was for the sake of fallen man, that had displeased God: and that through the offering up of himself once for all, through the Eternal Spirit, he hath forever perfected those (*IN ALL TIMES*) that were sanctified, who walked not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Rom. viii 1. Mark that." Vol. II. p. 867.

Richard Claridge on justification, says ; “ In a word, if justification be considered in its full and just latitude, neither Christ’s work without us, in the prepared body, nor his work within us, by his Holy Spirit, are to be excluded ; for both have their place and service in our complete and absolute justification. By the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ without us, we, truly repenting and believing, are through the mercy of God, justified from the imputations of sins and transgressions that are past, as though they had never been committed ; and by the mighty work of Christ within us, the power, nature, and habits of sin are destroyed ; that as sin once reigned unto death, even so now grace reigneth, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. And all this is effected, not by a bare or naked act of faith, separate from obedience, but in the obedience of faith ; Christ being the author of eternal salvation to none but those that obey him.” p. 79.

The Society of Friends published a declaration of its faith in the year 1693, from which we extract the following. “ We sincerely profess faith in God, by his only begotten Son Jesus Christ, as being our light and life, our only way to the Father, and also our only Mediator, and Advocate with the Father. That God created all things, he made the worlds, by his Son Jesus Christ, he being that powerful and living Word of God, by whom all things were made ; and that the Father, the Word and Holy Spirit are one, in divine being inseparable, one true, living and eternal God, blessed forever. Yet that this Word, or Son of God, in the fulness of time, took flesh, became perfect man, according to the flesh, descended and came of the seed of Abraham and David, but was miraculously conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary ; and also further declared powerfully to be the Son of God, according to the spirit of sanctification by the resurrection from the dead.”

“ That in the Word, or Son of God, was life, and the same life was the light of men ; and that he was that true light which enlightens every man coming into the world ; and therefore that men are to believe in the light, that they may become the children of the light. Hereby we believe in Christ the Son of God, as he is the light and life within us ; and wherein we must needs have sincere respect, and honour to, and belief in, Christ, as in his own unapproachable and incomprehensible glory and fulness, as he is the fountain of life and light and giver thereof unto us ; Christ as in himself, and as in us being not divided.”

“ That as man, Christ died for our sins, rose again and was received up into glory in the heavens ; he having in his dying for all, been that *one great, universal offering and sacrifice* for peace, atonement, and reconciliation between God and man, and he is the propitiation, not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world. We were reconciled by his death, but saved by his life.”

“ That Jesus Christ who sitteth at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, yet he is our king, high priest and prophet in his church, a minister of the Sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man. He is intercessor and advocate with the Father in heaven, and there appearing in the presence of God for us, being touched with the feeling of our infirmities, sufferings and sorrows. And also by his spirit in our

hearts, he maketh intercession according to the will of God, crying Abba, Father."

"That the gospel of the grace of God should be preached in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, being one in power, wisdom and goodness, and indivisible, or not to be divided in the great work of man's salvation."

"We sincerely confess and believe in Jesus Christ, both as he is true God, and perfect man; and that he is the author of our living faith in the power and goodness of God, as manifested in his son Jesus Christ, and by his own blessed spirit or divine unction revealed in us, whereby we inwardly feel and taste of his goodness, life and virtue; so as our souls live and prosper by and in him; and the inward sense of this divine power of Christ, and faith in the same, and this inward experience, is absolutely necessary to make a true, sincere, and perfect Christian in spirit and life."

"That divine honour and worship is due to the Son of God; and that he is in true faith to be prayed unto, and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, called upon, as the primitive Christians did, because of the glorious union or oneness of the Father and the Son; and that we cannot acceptably offer up prayers and praises to God, nor receive a gracious answer, or blessing from God, but in and through his dear Son Christ." See Sewell's History, vol. II. p. 499.

Besides the palpable errors we have enumerated, Elias Hicks and his adherents deny that mankind sustain any loss through the fall of Adam,* asserting that children come into the world precisely in the condition he did.* They also deny the existence of any evil spirit by which man is tempted, distinct from his own propensities.† "Heaven," they say, "is a state, and not a place by any means."‡ "Belief," with them, "is no virtue, and unbelief no crime:"§ and however at times they may make high pretensions to the divine light, it is evident that the guide which they follow is their own benighted reason.

Elias Hicks says; "In those things which relate to our moral conduct, we all have understandings alike, as reasonable beings; and we know when we do wrong to our fellow creatures; we know it *by our rational understanding*—WE WANT NO OTHER INSPIRATION THAN REASON AND JUSTICE." Again: "If we *transgress against God* or even against our fellow creatures, the *act* hath its *adequate* reward, and it will make us sorry for what we have done—that is we shall be losers by it and gain nothing, for no man shall gain by doing evil." "He [the Almighty] has set good and evil before us, and *left us* to elect for ourselves." Quaker, vol. II. p. 258. 9.

As regards morality, they want no other revelation than reason and justice, and when we transgress against God, the *act* will make us sorry for what we have done, that is we shall be *losers* and gain nothing. While they speak much of the necessity of divine revelation, reason is held up as the "balancing and comparing principle," by which we are to test those revelations, and decide whether they are "imprudent," or "counterfeit."¶ A simple and child-like reliance

* See Quaker 1 vol. p. 183. and Phil. Ser. p. 66. † Phil. Ser. p. 163. 166. 257. 258.

‡ New York Ser. p. 93. § Quaker 1 vol. 146. ¶ N. Y. and Phil. Ser. p. 90. 13. 208.

upon that *faith* which is of the operation of the Holy Spirit of God is thus disregarded, and the proud reason of man exalted into the seat of judgment. We need not therefore be surprised at the unsound opinions which they entertain, the contemptuous manner in which they treat the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, contained in the scriptures of Truth, and the very irreverent and unworthy sentiments respecting the blessed Saviour and Redeemer of men, with which their discourses and writings abound, as if it were a chief object, to decry the Holy Scriptures, and to degrade the Lord of life and glory.

The contrast between the Christian principles of our religious Society, and those held by the Separatists, who have adopted the anti-scriptural sentiments of Elias Hicks, must be strikingly obvious to every unprejudiced mind. The sorrowful effects of these principles in deranging the order and subordination necessary to the well-being of our religious Society, the disunity and discord produced by them in meetings and in families, have been very fully developed in the last five years, not only within the limits of this Yearly meeting, but also in many other parts. We believe it right to bear our decided testimony against such principles, as tending to destroy all faith in the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, and to break asunder the bands of civil and religious society. And we further declare, that as such who entertain and propagate them, have departed from the teachings of the Holy Spirit, which would have preserved them in the doctrines of Christ Jesus and his apostles, we cannot unite with them in church fellowship, nor own them to be of our communion ; neither can we correspond with any meetings or associations, holding those principles, and set up in violation of the excellent order, which has been instituted among us in the unfoldings of Divine wisdom. While we believe it to be a religious duty, thus to stand forth in the defence of the gospel of Christ, against the spirit and principles of libertinism and infidelity, we have no doubt, that many who have joined in the present schism, have been led into it, by the influence of misrepresentation and unfounded prejudice against their brethren, and without a full knowledge of the principles of their leaders. For such as these, we feel deep regret and tender solicitude : and it is our fervent desire for them, and for all others who have departed from the right way of the Lord, that he may be pleased to renew the visitations of his love and light to their souls, and in his own time, gather them to the fold of Christ's sheep, where they may go in and out, and find pasture.

In contemplating the merciful extension of divine help with which Friends have been favoured from time to time, enabling them to endure many close conflicts, and to stand fast in the support of our Christian principles and discipline, we desire to commemorate the Lord's goodness, and to place our confidence in him alone, firmly believing, that as this becomes the living concern of the members of our religious Society generally, he will more and more exalt and glorify the name of his beloved Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in and amongst us ; to whom with the Father be ascribed all honour and praise now and forever. Amen.

Signed by direction and on behalf of the Yearly Meeting.

SAMUEL BETTLE, Clerk.

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